

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5101

S E C R E T AMMAN 4729

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. "11652 XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS JO US

SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

1. I HAVE JUST COME FROM DISCUSSION WITH KING ON ANOTHER SUBJECT.

THE FIRST ISSUE HE RAISED WITH ME WAS AIR DEFENSE AND THE EFFORTS
IN CONGRESS TO TRY TO BLOCK THE SALE TO JORDAN.

2. HE TOLD ME THAT HE CONSIDERS THIS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE
IN OUR LONG RELATIONSHIP AND THAT IF THE SALE DOES NOT GO THROUGH
HE CANNOT IMAGINE A MORE SERIOUS SET OF DEVELOPMENTS FOR JORDAN
AND THE UNITED STATES. I TOLD HIM THAT HE COULD COUNT ON THE FULL
SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND YOURSELF WITH THE CONGRESS AND THAT
OUR COMMITMENT TO THE SALE WAS NOT MADE LIGHTLY, NOR WITHOUT
CAREFUL THOUGHT. HE SEEMED SOMEWHAT RELIEVED AT THIS, BUT HAS BEEN
FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY AND WAS CONCERNED TO HEAR FROM
NEWS REPORTS THAT SENATOR CASE SEEMED TO BE SPONSORING A
RESOLUTION TO BLOCK THE SALE.

3. COMMENT: KING HAS NOT PANICKED AND IS OUTWARDLY CALM BUT
IS ALSO NOT GIVEN TO HYPERBOLE AND IS THEREFORE MOST SERIOUS
WHEN HE SAYS QUESTION IS OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE FOR HIM AND OUR
RELATIONSHIP.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL FOR US TO HAVE
VERY SOON, HOPEFULLY BY MONDAY JULY 14 SOME ASSESSMENT OF
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WHERE THE ISSUE STANDS ON THE HILL AND THE LIKELY SUCCESS OR

FAILURE OF ANY ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK THE SALE. WHAT WE THEN PASS ON
THE KING CAN BE SORTED OUT ON BASIS OF SUCH AN ASSESSMENT.
ALSO WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO BE ABLE TO TELL HIM EXPECTED
SCENARIO ON HILL, PROPOSED WITNESSES, AND THE GENERAL LINE WHICH
DEPARTMENT AND OTHERS WILL BE TAKING.

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